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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/970,957	10/03/2001	Yasuhiko Ishikawa	482782005700	2665

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EXAMINER

LEWIS, TISHA D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3681

DATE MAILED: 03/11/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Offic Action Summary

Application No.	Applicant(s)	
09/970,957	ISHIKAWA, YASUHIKO	
Examiner	Art Unit	
TISHA D. LEWIS	3681	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-4, 6, 8, 19 and 20 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 5, 7 and 9-18 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____ 6) Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

The following is a response to the amendment received on January 17, 2003, which has been entered.

Claim Objections

Claims 10 and 11 are objected to because of the following informalities:

-In the line 2 of each claim, "comprising" should be changed to --comprises--.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 2 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 2 recites the limitation "the torque transmission member" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

As to claim 20, line 2, it is unclear as to what the "a reduction" is, if it is meant to be a reduction gear, then this should be clarified in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the

applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-4, 6, 8 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yoshioka ('433). As to claim 1, Yoshioka discloses a differential including:

a drive gear (212),

a differential housing (222) driven by the drive gear, and

a clutch (260) connecting the drive gear to the differential housing (column 8, line 15-17).

As to claims 2 and 19, Yoshioka discloses a support member (230) disposed between the drive gear and housing for relative rotation support between the two wherein the support member is in the form of a radial bearing providing axial support.

As to claim 3 and 8, Yoshioka discloses the clutch and support member on the same axis.

As to claims 4 and 6, Yoshioka discloses the drive gear overlapping the support member radially wherein the support member holds the drive gear at least at two points.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshioka in view of Japanese patent 402290721. Yoshioka discloses a differential including:

a drive gear (212),
a differential housing (222) driven by the drive gear, and
a clutch (260) connecting the drive gear to the differential housing (column 8, line 15-17), but does not show if a reduction gear is connected to the drive gear.

The Japanese patent discloses a drive gear (66) driving a differential (26) wherein a reduction gear (56) drives the drive gear.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide Yoshioka with a reduction gear to transmit torque to the drive gear in view of the Japanese patent to reduce the speed of the drive gear during differential slipping.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5, 7 and 9-18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art of record does not disclose or render obvious a motivation to provide for:

-(As to claim 5) a differential wherein a clutch for connecting a drive gear to a differential housing is located between an actuator for operating the clutch and a support member for supporting the drive gear on the differential housing.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

-Boers et al ('013), Japanese patent 360001030 and 63254253 are all cited as having differentials using a clutch to connect torque of a drive gear to a differential housing.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to TISHA D. LEWIS whose telephone number is 703-305-0921. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Thur 8 AM TO 3 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, CHARLES A. MARMOR can be reached on 703-308-0830. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3597 for regular communications and 703-305-3597 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-2168.


Tisha D. Lewis
Patent Examiner
AU 3681
March 6, 2003